

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/640,011

Examiner

Jeffrey D. Carlson

Applicant(s)

ANTTILA ET AL.

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NW

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to after-final amendment filed 5/20/04 and examiner amendment (attached).
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 21-42.
3. ☒ The drawings filed on 20 May 2004 are accepted by the Examiner.
4. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

5. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
 6. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
7. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____ | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

J.D.C.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136(a) is required in order to make an examiner's amendment which places this application in condition for allowance. During a telephone conversation conducted on 6/30/04, Donald Stout agreed to the following changes. Applicant is being charged for 2 (TWO) MONTH(S) extension of time and has previously authorized the Director to charge Deposit Account No. 01-2135 the required fee of \$420.00 for this extension and authorized the following examiner's amendment. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

- The After Final amendment filed 5/20/04 has been entered.
- The following changes describe changes made by the examiner (with respect to the marked-up claims submitted in the 5/20/04 after-final amendment).

The application has been amended as follows:

- Claim 21 line 5, "copying" has been replaced by --providing--.
- Claim 32 has been rewritten as follows:

32. (Currently Amended) A data processing system for issuing coupons, comprising:

a server for generating master coupons at locations attributable to different merchants and for establishing locations attributable to customers for receiving coupons;

a network connection allowing customers to access master coupons at said merchant locations and for the copying of master coupons at locations as customer coupons;

[said customer coupons having a benefit which varies in accordance with properties defined by the master coupon;]

a server for copying the customer coupon as a child coupon for another customer to provide a shared benefit of the customer coupon to the another customer with the child coupon; and wherein

said customer coupons have a benefit which varies in accordance with properties defined by the master coupon; and

[modifying] the data processing system modifies the benefit of the customer coupon in response to sharing a benefit of the copied customer coupon with the child coupon.

■ Claim 35 has been rewritten as follows:

35. (Currently Amended) A coupon system comprising:

a data processing system which issues a master coupon, a customer coupon and a child coupon, and wherein;

the master coupon comprises a first indicator describing at least one business at which the master coupon can be redeemed, a second indicator describing a time period during which the master coupon is valid, a third indicator describing at least one additional parameter which effects validity of the master coupon, and a fourth indicator describing a benefit of the master coupon to a redeemer, with the benefit being variable and

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depending on at least one event occurring after issuance of the master coupon; and

the customer coupon comprises a copy of the master coupon reserved for another customer at a reserved site; and wherein

the data processing system enables the child coupon [is copied] to be copied from the customer coupon and to share [shares] a benefit between the customer coupon and the child coupon; and

the customer coupon has a benefit which [is modified] the data processing system modifies by sharing the benefit with the child coupon.

Reasons For Allowance

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Applicant has claimed the structure and steps for "sharing" an electronic coupon by making an electronic copy and providing it to another customer. Further, applicant claims the structure and steps for modifying the user's original coupon benefit based upon such copying/sharing. While the examiner has set forth reasons why one of ordinary skill would be motivated to "share" a coupon so as to result in a friend obtaining a coupon as well, there is no teaching or motivation to modify the benefit of the user's original coupon for doing such sharing. Barnett et al appears to be the best cited reference, especially for the teaching of varying the redemption value of an electronic coupon [col 12 lines 8-16]. Barnett et al enables value changes, but not responsive to any "sharing" of the coupon; Barnett et al does not disclose any "sharing" of coupons.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jeffrey D. Carlson whose telephone number is 703-308-3402. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:30-6p, (off on alternate Fridays).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Eric Stamber can be reached on 703-305-8469. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Jeffrey D. Carlson
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3622

jdc